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Types of Intertextuality

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The essay starts with the contention that there is a fundamental difference between allusion and intertextuality since allusion refers to authorial reference to some other text(s) whereas intertextuality addresses the ways in which a text is interwoven within cultural signifying practices. Moreover, though the study of allusions informs the reading, it is not as important to the process of sense making or to the ethnicity of reading as is the intertextual dynamics between a text and its intertext/arhitext. The argument proceeds by differentiating among three types of intertextuality: subversive, adaptive and transpositional, the first being characteristic of modernism and the second of postmodernism. Transpositional intertextuality is particularly significant for postcolonial studies since it addresses the problem of cultural dynamics between the centre (metropolis) and periphery, which redefines not only periphery but the center as well.

Certain terms in literary criticism become fashionable in certain periods. Since the 80s intertextuality has definitely been one of them. In vain have numerous critics, the translator and editor of the English version of Kristeva's *Desire in Language* being just one of them, warned: "The concept (...) has been generally misunderstood. It has nothing to do with matters of influence by one writer upon another, or with the sources of a literary work".¹ The concept of intertextuality coincides with and

¹ Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language – A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. New York: Columbia UP, 1980, p. 15



is the result of the Copernican overturn in traditional vs. postmodern understanding of the relation between language and authorship. Whereas the traditional literary analysis of a modern, predominantly (post)romantic text sees the author as the creative power from which the text originates, and therefore references to other texts are seen as the result of authorial creative will, the postmodern concept of the relation between subject and language privileges the notion of textuality² over creativity and authorship. Therefore, Kristeva sees intertextuality as “the transposition of one or more systems of signs into another, accompanied by a new articulation of the enunciative and denotative position”³. She sees the novel as the most ideologically charged genre and therefore as the most apt for intertextual studies: “The ideologeme of the novel is precisely this *intertextual* (italics mine) function defined according to Te (extra-novelistic textual set) and having value within Tn (novelistic textual set).”⁴ Similarly, Barthes will claim that “epistemologically, the concept of intertext is what brings to the theory of the text the volume of sociality: the whole of language, anterior or contemporary, comes to the text, not following the path of a discoverable filiation or a willed imitation, but that of dissemination – an image which makes sure the text has the status not of a reproduction but of a productivity”.⁵

However, such a concept is of little use to practical literary criticism or indeed to any appreciation of a literary text. Except maybe for cultural studies which look into ways in which a text is interwoven in current textual practices, literary studies, even when they can be described as intertextual, concern themselves with what Kristeva sees as the relation between “Te (extra-novelistic textual set) ... /having value within/ Tn (novelistic textual set).”⁶ However, in these analyses Te is seen as a text

² We are spoken before we speak, claims Lacan. In the light of such an understanding of the relationship between subject and language comes Barthes’ notion of ‘already read’ (*From Work to Text*).

³ Kristeva, *ibid*, p.15

⁴ Kristeva, *ibid*, p. 37

⁵ Roland Barthes, “Theory of the Text” in Robert Young. *Untying the Text – a Post-Structuralist Reader*. Boston, London, Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981, p. 39

⁶ Kristeva, *ibid*, p. 37





or a body of texts or discourses that can be defined and often, even in the case of postmodernist texts, that have been consciously chosen.

For this reason, Paul de Man's distinction between referential and semantic function of language becomes useful in defining intertextuality. According to Paul de Man from the 19th century onwards symbol has been privileged over allegory. "In *Wahrheit und Methode*," he writes, "Hans-Georg Gadamer makes the valorisation of symbol at the expense of allegory. (...)The supremacy of the symbol, conceived as an expression of unity between the representative and the semantic function of language, becomes a commonplace that underlies literary taste, literary criticism, and literary history."⁷ (...)Language thus conceived divides the subject into an empirical self, immersed in the world, and a self that becomes like a sign in its attempt at differentiation and self-definition."⁸ It is the semantic function of language, privileged by postmodernists, that makes intertextual reading indispensable. But every text is dialogical both to its tradition and its context (or extra-textual set, to put it in Kristeva's terms). Romantic belief that writing comes as a spontaneous creative flow inspired by nature is programmatic for romanticism. However, even Wordsworth who in his 1800 *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* defines poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" is aware of the semantic rather than referential power of poetic language. As de Man has pointed out Wordsworth "insists that the imagination can only come into full play when 'the light of sense goes out'".⁹ In this case writing becomes a dialog between past and present, consciousness and remembrance, but also between a sign and a past sign. This dialogical relationship is the site where intertextuality comes into play. In other words, it is intertextuality that exemplifies the semantic nature of language highlighting the fact that language refers to other linguistic practices rather than to personal experience.

⁷ Paul de Man, *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism*, London: Routledge, 1996, pp. 188-189.

⁸ de Man, *ibid*, p.213

⁹ Paul de Man, *The Rhetoric of Romanticism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984, p. 16





In this, allusions and intertextuality are similar. However, there are important differences. The study of allusions contributes to the understanding of the ontological nature of writing since it uncovers the literary tradition and cultural context that have influenced the author as a part of the author's tradition and his/her personal experience. Intertextuality, on the other hand is epistemological, since it studies the ways in which a text is codified within signifying practices of a given culture, which, in their turn, participate in the process of sense making. It is therefore that intertextuality should not be seen as any interrelationship between two texts, and definitely not as the study of allusions. The study of intertextuality I see as the study of the ways in which one text subverts, absorbs or highlights diachronic or synchronic signifying practices. This relationship between one text and another text, or body of texts synecdochal to a certain signifying practice, can be classified in different ways. However, in this essay I shall concentrate on the following ones: *subversive, adaptive and transpositional*.

The first one is characteristic of modernism, in particular of avantgarde in which "poetics of denial" makes a grand gesture of de-aestheticizing canonical works of art in an attempt to highlight and subvert their ethical and aesthetic presuppositions.

Postmodernist relation to canonical texts differs and can be described as adaptive. This means that the relation between the two texts is not antagonistic, though it is not usually affirmative. Linda Hutcheon sees parody as the most important feature of postmodernism, but points out that it differs from avantgarde parody since "Duchamp's modernist is 'ready-made' whereas postmodernism's is 'already made'". "But", she maintains "this parodic reprise of the past of art is not nostalgic; it is always critical. .../W/hat is called out to our attention is the entire representational process – in a wide range of forms and modes of production – and the impossibility of finding any totalizing model to resolve the resulting postmodern contradictions."¹⁰ However, I believe that something else is

¹⁰ Linda Hutcheon. *The Politics of Postmodernism*. London and New York: Routledge, 1989, pp. 93 - 96





at stake. Since postmodernist art is characterized by the loss of fate in the possibility of the representation of reality, individual experience is always culturally mediated and the function of language is limited to semantic. Consequently, the representation of reality (nature, social life, etc.) and the attitude of the protagonist of a particular art work to this reality are shifted from the relationship between a subject and reality to the relation between a subject and the *representation* of reality.

Finally, I propose to look into intertextuality/interculturality on the synchronic level. By examining how the transposition of a cultural text into a different context influences the signification of both, I propose to argue that no "borrowing" is innocent – it influences sense-making not only of the "copy", but of the original as well.

Intertextual relations, I intend to argue, can be best observed in the case of architextual relationship between two texts, the reference to the architext being clearly pointed out. If literature matters, or can matter, it is exactly its ability to de-naturalize received ideas and concepts, metaphors and stereotypes. Since a canonical work of art is representative of a certain ideology, questioning of the architext is methodologically most efficient. However, it is equally important to highlight and expose metaphors that have become ideological *lacunae* or "blind spots" of both poetic and everyday discourse.

The most radical and subversive inter- (or meta-) textual relationship between two texts occurs in the avantgarde art, when the reference to or the quotation of the first text is challenged and reevaluated, its social and ideological presuppositions highlighted and thus undermined. The most obvious example of such a dehierarchization is Duchamp's recycling of Mona Lisa, the uniqueness and monumental significance of the work undermined by its multiplication and de-aesthetization. There are numerous works of art created during the period of avantgarde (futurism, both Russian and Italian, expressionism as well as Dadaism and to a lesser extent symbolism) that are polemical to the previous periods and question their ideological as well as stylistic postulates. Thus a young Croatian poet, Janko Polić Kamov who died in 1910 at the age of 23, in his collection of poems entitled *The Curse* subverts what he recognizes as the moral backbone of social hypocrisy – the Catholic religion. The





poems together with his other writings are so direct in their aesthetic and ideological denial of the accepted norms that during his lifetime they were seen as the discourse of the lunatic. Only later has his work been recognized as one of the most original avantgarde gestures.

Kamov's subversiveness bears some similarities to the most famous modernist architextual¹¹ reinscription – Joyce's *Ulysses*. The relationship between Joyce's *Ulysses* and Homer's architext can be seen in Eliot's terms as "a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history."¹² The diminished parallel between antiquity and modern times can be also interpreted as a typically Modernist concern with the ordinary rather than the heroic. However, what is relevant for the novel's sense making is that the title and the chapter division determine our reading as architextual. The novel therefore cannot be said to be mimetic, dealing with the reality of Dublin life however minutely the details of this life were portrayed, since the sense making in the novel does not depend on our knowledge of the layout of the streets in Dublin but on the semiotic quality of the novel, its referentiality not only to Homer, but to the history of writing. To this history Joyce's novel is neither affirmative nor polemical. Nor is it integrative in the way postmodern writing tends to be. We may refer to it as ironic, but then have to qualify the irony in order to differentiate it from the irony typical of postmodernism. Therefore, I would rather describe it as dialogical, this dialog sometimes being almost grotesque as in the rendering of *Kathleen Ni Houlihan*, traditional symbol of Irish patriotic sentiment, revived in Yeats's play and in *Ulysses* ironically rendered in the character of Gerty. The fact that Gerty does not walk like a queen but limps is the most obvious instance of diminished parallel but

¹¹ The term architext is based on Genette's notion of the generic tradition of a genre (Cf. Genette, Gérard: *The Architext: An Introduction* (1992), transl. Lewin, Jane A., Berkley, U. of California Press), but also takes into account Derridian notion of arche-writing and Foucauldian concept of the archeology of knowledge, in particular his contention that each discursive practice is structured around some fundamental ideologemes which underlie it. See also Genette, Gérard: *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Literature, Culture, Theory) (1997) transl. Lewin, Jane A., Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press

¹² T. S. Eliot, "Ulysses, Order, and Myth" *The Dial*, 1923





not the most important one. What is more ironic is that Gerty encourages a different kind of masturbation – Bloom’s individual and sexual, instead of rhetorical and nationalistic collective provoked by the performance of Yeats’s play. In other scenes we encounter the case of a diminished parallel (such as the Citizen throwing after Bloom a cookie tin, instead of the original rock) or just a trivialized version of the old story (“Circe”, “Sirens”). However, in all these instances of grotesqueness, irony and dialogism it is not only that we testify the modernist shift from ontological to epistemological¹³, but that the semiotic quality of the text is privileged. It is the quality of Joyce’s text that Derrida names *hypermnnesia* that shifts the focus of the text from referential to semiotic, turning the signifying side of the sign back to itself, enabling multiplication of meanings. In the end the real hero of *Ulysses* is neither Bloom nor Molly but language itself. In this quality Joyce’s texts might be unique. But what they (and in particular *Ulysses*) share with other avantgarde texts is the re-evaluative questioning of tradition.

This is what provides for a similarity between *Ulysses* and Anouilh’s *Antigone*. First performed in 1944 this play is much more straightforward in its re-writing of the architext. Repeating the story about Antigone’s tragic sacrifice in order that higher moral values are preserved, it points to a major difference between traditional value system as portrayed in Sophocle’s play and the contemporary one. In Sophocle’s play Antigone’s superior moral values are also expressed by the Chorus and supported by the people. In the contemporary society there is no equivalent to the Chorus which unisonely echoes moral values. Also, the people, represented by the soldiers, instead of being concerned with good and evil, worry about everyday trivia. Therefore Antigone’s sacrifice is of no universal value. It is her little private gesture which concerns nobody else. In this way a cathartic grand narrative of the triumph of sacred over mundane and good over evil is brought into question. But even more importantly, the play also subverts the aesthetization of the sacrificial, of individual heroism having a cathartic effect on society. Consequently, on the one hand it is also a

¹³ In other words the text does not concern itself with the mythical, but with the individual search for knowledge and self-realisation.





diminished parallel (as is Joyce's *Ulysses*), pointing to the fact that modern times are unheroic and therefore individual greatness and sacrifice do not receive social recognition and support. On the other hand (also similarly to the reference on Yeats's play in *Ulysses*¹⁴) Anouilh's *Antigone* makes a strong political statement against the aesthetization of violence through the aesthetization of the sacrificial, its political hypocrisy being twofold. Such an aesthetization does not only justify individual victimization presenting it as heroic; it also diminishes the sacrifice and suffering of other war victims that have not undergone such heroic representation.

In the way it questions its architext Anouilh's play is closer to postmodernism than to avantgarde, since it does not overturn it, but only reinscribes and modifies it. This modification, however, is not the modification of the architext itself; it examines what happens when the architext is transposed into a new political context. The existence of this new political context, whether we see it as existentialist or war motivated, is not mediated through culture, but is there outside culture, in the cold reality of World War II. This reality calls for modification of the text prohibiting its ideology of meaningful sacrifice ending with catharsis. For this reason such a reinscription of the play is different from a postmodernist one due to its very strong, politically engaged statement.

Luko Paljetak's *After Hamlet*¹⁵ was written in Croatian during or immediately after the siege of Dubrovnik. The way it uses *Hamlet* gives the impression that it does not contest *Hamlet* on ideological grounds, but uses it as a cultural product, as something "already made" (Hutcheon). Its relation to the architext can be described as a "postmodernist parody /which is/ a value problematizing, the denaturalizing form of acknowledging the

¹⁴ The case of Yeats's play *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* is of particular interest for this argumentation. Numerous accounts of Easter Rising point out that it was 'staged' rather than strategically planned and that there was some theatrical quality about it. Many protagonists were linked with the Abbey theatre, its most memorable performance being that of *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, the play for which Yeats later, in "The Man and the Echo", asked himself: "Did that play of mine send out/ certain men the English shot?"

¹⁵ Luko Paljetak: *After Hamlet* (1992), transl. Graham McMaster (1999), Zagreb: *Most/ The Bridge*





history (and through irony, politics) of representation".¹⁶ However, the radical questioning of the value system the play presupposes is more than a postmodern re-writing. Subverting the structure of a tragedy, the teleological rationale of which is catharsis (suggesting that evil is punished and good and justice triumph in the end) the play is subversive rather than corrective to the ideologematic tenor of its architext. Evoking, though never explicitly mentioning as its locale Dubrovnik in 1991/92, when in this city of culture which had testified numerous performances of *Hamlet* on its city walls and fortresses *Hamlet* could not be performed due to the bitter reality of the siege. Due to this extra-textual context *After Hamlet* becomes a serious questioning of all humanistic values which *Hamlet*, as one of the most prominent canonic texts about power and justice represents. The idea that justice will triumph in the end, Paljetak's play maintains, belongs to the realm of the mythical. In reality, Europe's indecisiveness and indifference keep preventing any action of liberating Dubrovnik. For this reason, Paljetak's *After Hamlet* should not be read as one of the postmodernist reinscriptions, but as a forceful and radical subversion of the ideological presuppositions of one of the landmarks of the humanistic Eurocentric canon. Paljetak's *After Hamlet* thus complicates the question of intertextuality. Like Anouilh's *Antigone* it requires to be read as interwoven within two different intertexts – Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and the contemporary discursive practices of European politics. However, in the case of Anouilh's *Antigone* the mode of reinscription is in accord with the reality to which it is referential – it is concerned with the existential questions emerging during World War II. In the case of *After Hamlet* the relation between architext and the historic context is dialogical, the historic context being corrective to the architext.

In the end of the play the audience is told that the truth Hamlet's son could perhaps tell is irrelevant anyway, for

all of you are witnesses who perceive
affairs the way you see them
from your chairs, and all the rest is
interpretation.

¹⁶ Linda Hutcheon, *ibid.* p. 94





However, this opacity of the signifier that makes the world arbitrary in this play is opposed to the cold reality of the war in which *Hamlet* cannot be played not because of an existential crisis but because the artillery in the hills beyond do not allow it. This juxtaposition between postmodern arbitrariness and the reality of the siege points to the ethical unbearable-ness of the lightness of being that has become the epistemological credo of the postmodern world. It is this unbearable lightness of being that the play, using *Hamlet* as its architext, interrogates with so much suggestiveness.

Whereas the modernist text is polemical to its architext, the site of contestation being the universal values these architexts represent in relation to more idiosyncratic and individualized modernist ones, in the case of postmodernism a shift (which might be seen as trivialization) occurs. Linda Hutcheon argues that postmodernist parody is "ironic and critical, not nostalgic or antiquarian in its relation to the past. It 'de-doxifies' our assumptions about our representations of that past. Postmodern parody is both deconstructively critical and constructively creative, paradoxically making us aware of both the limits and the powers of representation – in any medium."¹⁷ In the case of Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* this is partly true, in particular when we look at the way in which it juxtaposes two discourses – the contemporary one being best described as "Cosmopolitan"; the other, "antiquarian", established by the metatextual relationship to Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*. What makes the novel good reading is the irony with which the main character as the product of contemporary culture is portrayed. The novel highlights the way in which the self is formed by advertising and media, disciplined (to use Foucault's term) to accept cultural myths¹⁸ as naturalized and therefore

¹⁷ Linda Hutcheon, *ibid*, p. 98

¹⁸ "Myth is depoliticized speech. One must naturally understand *political* in its deeper meaning, as describing the whole of human relations in their real, social structure, in their power of making the world: one must above all give an active value to the prefix *de-*: here it represents an operational movement; it permanently embodies a defaulting. In passing from history to nature, myth acts economically: it abolishes the complexity of human acts; it gives them the simplicity of essences..... things appear to mean something by themselves." Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, New York, Hill and Wang, 1972, p.143





given¹⁹. Bridget Jones is a product and a victim of these stereotypes²⁰ and therefore a pitiful figure, one who will diet all her life and vainly hope that weight loss will bring Mr. Right into her life. But, when Helen Fielding at the very beginning introduces Mr. Darcy, the reader knows that the novel should end differently. And it does. In relying on the plot in *Pride and Prejudice* as its architextual blueprint the novel is relieved of mimetic responsibility. Though the happy ending is psychologically unmotivated, since in character Bridget Jones does not resemble Elizabeth who provokes empathy, through the happy ending a comic mode is secured. The irony in the text is shifted from the very ordinary character of Bridget Jones to the oppression of culture which through its advertisement and media alienates her from her own, ordinary self. Consequently, in this novel it is not its architext that is being challenged. The architext provides a stabilizing element (for whatever it is worth) in the oppressive modern world of youth, fashion and beauty, making comic relief possible, and, to the readers' satisfaction²¹, a happy ending.

However, the relation between Austen's novel and *Bridget Jones' Diary* is not as unproblematic as it seems. The fact that Austen's narrative provides for an undeserved and unmotivated happy ending, problematizes not only this happy ending itself, but also highlights the element of romance in Austen's own plot.

So far we have dealt with architextuality as perhaps the most prominent form of intertextuality, the one in which one text (architext/ meta-text) has a *synecdochal* function in relation to the culture it represents. If according to Kristeva "the heteronomical negativity of writing operates, on the one hand, between *naming* (utterance/enunciation) carried out by the subject of understanding (meaning) and *polynomia*, that is, the pluralization of meaning by different means (polyglottism, polysemia, etc.) traversing nonsense and indicating a suppression of the subject.",²² we

¹⁹ Bridget is surprised at discovering that one really needs calories as body fuels since modern culture has convinced her that eating is the act of greed.

²¹ Since the reader has from the very beginning of the novel identified with Bridget – her resolutions, her inability to stick to them, her enormous talent to make a fool of herself – he/she is on her side.

²² Kristeva, *Poetic language*, p.111





have dealt with the “naming” – the conscious choice of architext which the text problematizes. It is exactly through the act of highlighting of the *scatoma* or the blind spots produced by signifying practices in historic grand narratives (forming the canon) that the de-historization and denaturalization of these ideological strongholds of social discourses occurs. For this reason I want to proceed by arguing that every intertextual relationship is not equally relevant, the most relevant being these that do not just enrich our reading of the text (which the awareness of their being interwoven with other texts does), but also highlight and problematize the ethicity of the intertextually evoked texts.

The strong and straightforward patriotic rhetoric of the Irish love song “Grace” becomes even stronger when we become aware of the historic circumstances to which it refers. It is not just a typical patriotic poem privileging the call for courage and sacrifice for one’s country over the individualized love for a woman. The poem is referential to a very concrete (and to the Irish very familiar) historic context since it refers to the fate of one of the heroes of the Eastern Rising. Joseph Plunkett was one of the sixteen leaders of the 1916 Easter Rebellion that were executed. Before he died he was wedded in prison to his fiancée Grace Gifford. Therefore the reference in the lyrics of “Grace” to “his blood upon the rose” is not intertextual only to Plunkett’s poetry, but also to his life which he sacrificed to turn the little black rose into the red one.²³ The referentiality to the rose becomes even more complicated in the case of Yeats’s poems. A rose for him also symbolizes Ireland, but it is also the occult *Rosa Alchemica*. Finally, a rose is the symbol of a woman as in *roman de la rose*, courtly love being identified with nobility, sacrifice and knighthood.²⁴ Yet these

²³ I am referring here to Plunkett’s poem “The Little Black Rose Shall be Red at Last” the tenor of which is the notion that sacrifice will redden the black rose (a traditional symbol of Ireland) into bloom. The line “His blood upon the rose” refers to this metamorphosis but also Plunkett’s poetic visions of Christ’s sacrifice which he identifies with the patriotic one.

²⁴ For example, in “September 1913” lamenting over the romantic Ireland, now dead and gone, Yeats writes:
“Yet could we turn the years again, And call those exiles as they were In all their loneliness and pain, You’d cry, ‘Some woman’s yellow hair Has maddened every mother’s son’: They weighed so lightly what they gave. But let them be, they’re dead and gone, They’re with O’Leary in the grave.”





references, though enriching the reading and its jouissance do not place the text and its intertext in any dialogical position. It is for this reason that I prefer to see these intertextual relations as allusive or referential rather than intertextual.

For the same reason when Antonia Byatt in her story "The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye" makes her character, Gillian Perholt, a scholar, re-locate the phrase "floating redundant" from the common 20th century use to Miltonic, I see this reference as intertextual. Namely, "floating redundant" which is repeated several times in one part of the story, in modern culture refers to someone like her – husbandless, childless (since both her children and her husband have deserted her), and destined to a middle aged woman's fate – to be left alone with the empty nest, redundant. But she remembers Milton's usage of the same image in the description of the serpent in the Garden of Paradise: "With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect/ amidst his circling spires, that on the grass/ Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape,/ and lovely."²⁵ The reference to Milton is not there just to point to the protagonist's interests or education. By evoking Milton's description of the serpent (which is Eve's other) she denaturalizes the phrase "floating redundant" in its prejudicial connotation and turns it into a reference to something positive.

Similar usage of intertextuality occurs in some metaphors Sylvia Plath employs in her poetry. By the strategy of evoking traditional stereotypes of womanhood and then overturning them, Sylvia Plath de-naturalizes cultural givens. When the poetic persona in Sylvia Plath's poem "Tulips" refers to her husband and child in the family photo as "smiling hooks" and later in the poem connects tulips with an awful baby that weights her down, tulips being likened to "a dozen red lead sinkers around her neck" the whole notion of idyllic motherhood and supportive family is overturned. What is preferred in the poem is whiteness and quietude over love (symbolized by red tulips) which is overbearing. The poem is therefore characteristic of what Plath's poetry represents – a strong confessional voice challenging the traditional concepts of femininity and

²⁵ S. A. Byatt: *The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye: Five Fairy Stories*, Vintage, 1994. p. 95-96





motherhood. It has been the combination of this strong poetic voice and biography which has given it additional weight that has made Sylvia Plath's poetry one of the landmarks of women's writing.

Similarly, when Adrienne Rich in the 11th of her *21 Love Songs* claims "Every peak is a crater. This is the law of volcanoes/ making them eternally and visibly female./ No height without depth, without a burning core" she uses the images previously employed to express male sexuality²⁶, but reverses them to implicate femininity and female desire. In doing so she challenges one of the strongholds of patriarchy – the concept of male active sexual drive as opposed to female passivity.²⁷

If literature as an ethical project matters – or at least could matter – it is because it effects - or could effect –the metaphors we live by. These metaphors through which power relations which are cultural givens are represented as natural are "blind spots" of a certain ideological system. By highlighting them the system becomes de-naturalized²⁸, shown as historically determined and thus changeable. Modernist literature and art have challenged the notion of beauty as the last cornerstone of the three qualities Idealism had ascribed to Art, namely the notions of good, true and beautiful. But modernism has also challenged fundamental values perpetuated through artistic production - the myths of family, home, and homeland - and by its privileging of the search for the individual's

²⁶ "And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething, As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing, A mighty fountain momentarily was forced: Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail, Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail" (T.S. Coleridge, "Kubla Khan")

"Then fire rose from the volcano around the old Quetzalcoatl, in wings and glittering feathers. And with the wings of fire and the glitter of sparks Quetzalcoatl flew up, up, like a wafting fire, like a glittering bird, up, into the space, and away to the white steps of heaven, that lead to the blue walls, where is the door to the dark. So he entered in and was gone." (D.H. Lawrence "The Plumed Serpent".)

²⁷ It should not surprise us that Freud thought female homosexuality unlikely since female sexuality he saw as passive and submissive, therefore needing male initiative.

²⁸ By "de-naturalizing" I understand a process of showing that something that is presented as being naturally given and therefore eternal, fortified beyond a possibility of change, is proved to be historically (ideologically) determined and thus changeable. See also Barthes on myth as a depoliticized speech, note 18





self-definition over already formulated concepts of the self. This created belief that an individual can liberate himself/herself from the past. For this reason modernist art, in a more politicized way than postmodernism, is intertextual, its intertextuality being in what Kristeva has described as "Te (extra-novelistic textual set) ... /having value within/ Tn (novelistic textual set)". The shift from referential to semantic function of language is important for modernism, but even more important is the fact that modernism is highly aware of language as a prison house from which it desires to break away. In order to do so it becomes referential not only to its tradition, but also to current discursive practices.

The relation between novelistic (or textual) and extra-novelistic (extra-textual) set has become the primary concern of anthropological or cultural studies of literature and culture. How much a text is embedded in its cultural and a topological context, and how the two are inseparable, Kershner illustrates with an anecdote from Joyce's life. Joyce had a picture of Cork on the wall. When a visitor asked what it was he would say: "Cork". But the visitor would then specify that he was in fact interested in the frame (which was made of cork). "Oh, that's cork, too", would be the answer.²⁹ The frame, Kershner maintains, is essential to the readings of Joyce, the title of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* alerting us to a frame in its very title. "Yet for fifty years or so we have become expert in disengaging the book's text from its intertexts."³⁰ A new historical reading, Kershner claims, attempts to prove that a text is inseparable from its context, or, more precisely, from the signifying practices within which it is codified. For that reason the national, gender and religious stereotypes as well as sexual norms become an integral part of the text. A good example of such a reading is Mullin's "Don't Cry for Me Argentina: 'Eveline' and the Seductions of Emigration Propaganda"³¹. In this essay

²⁹ R.B.Kershner, "Genius, Degeneration, and the Pantopticon" in James Joyce. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, ed. by R.B. Kershner, p.373

³⁰ Kershner, *ibid*, p. 373

³¹ Katherine Mullin "Don't Cry for Me Argentina: 'Eveline' and the Seductions of Emigration Propaganda", in *Semicolonial Joyce*, eds. Derek Attridge and Majorie Howes, Cambridge UP, 2000





Mullin persuasively argues that the reading of Joyce's short story "Eveline" should take into account its historic background. The story was originally written for *The Irish Homestead* and "the fiction published init/ during 1900 and 1904 uniformly insisted that emigration was not a road to self-fulfilment, adventure, or even Eveline Hill's 'escape'. Rather, it ruptured the natural bonds of lovers, families, community, and nation."³² On the other hand Argentina was seen as the place to escape to and these two competing emigration propagandas imposed upon Eveline have caused the condition of aphasia with which the story ends. Consequently, Eveline is a victim "not of nebulous perils of 'abroad' described in *The Irish Homestead*, nor of the white slave trader disguised as Frank. Instead, she is a very private woman who succumbs to very public fictions of her proper place: home."³³ Mullin's article is the example of anthropologic reading at its very best since it looks into two discursive practices competing at the time when the story was written and its intertextual relation to them. This relation is not just collateral but the narrative highlights and exposes these intertextualized narratives as limiting. Eveline cannot escape since she is trapped by them to such a degree that she is incapable of overcoming clichés.

However, Mullin's article, as well as Roy Foster's claim in the letter he wrote to me in answer to my review of his *W.B. Yeats: A Life*, opens an important question about interpretation. Are we to reject in totality New Critics' notion about the autonomy of a text and claim that it is only informed interpretative communities that can access a text fully? If we have - with Roland Barthes and his distinction between writerly and readerly texts - rejected the notion of meaning and have replaced it by the notion of interpretation, are we now to turn to the concept of archaeology of (inter)textuality. Intertextuality, which I see as making the reader aware of the relationship between a text and its social and cultural intertext, I believe to be the most important feature of reading, not only aesthetically, but ethically as well. However, the idea behind Mullin's methodology and Foster's contention that certain data are indispensable

³² Mullin, *ibid*, p. 173

³³ Mullin, *ibid*, p. 198





for the proper (sic!) reading of a text, I find excessive. Fortunately, Scholes' reading of "Eveline"³⁴ proves that the study in intertextuality (Scholes' reading is based on Barthes' five semiotic codes) does not necessarily require a sociological or any other archival research as the preparation for reading.

However, the study of intertextuality cannot be completely separated from sociology, in particular when feminist or postcolonial criticism is applied. In such cases the question of the relation between a text and its *new* context becomes essential. For example, when Chinua Achebe reads Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* he does not historicize it. He reads it from his own ideological position. In this way he has instrumentalized the text in order to make a political statement. The same can be argued for some feminist readings of the canon. These readings raised awareness that the text was not there to be deciphered nor that the act of reading happens in a vacuum, but that the process of reading is subjective and that the perspective from which one reads is a part of semiosis.

A very important aspect of such a re-evaluative reading is the re-contextualization of the text in relation to "periphery" and "metropolis".³⁵ In such a case the metropolis will always claim primacy to authoritative interpretation. But peripheral appropriation of a text cannot be just its "copy". The relation is much more complex and resembles that of a slave and a master – one being dependent on the other not only existentially but also in self-expression. Therefore, in his reading of Joyce's story "Counterparts" Lloyd³⁶ points to the symbolic meaning of a counterpart as a legal document. The counterpart, as a copy torn off from the original

³⁴ Robert Scholes, *Semiotics and Interpretation*, Yale UP, 1983

³⁵ Bruce Robbins relies on Said's notion that the "voyage in" encourages an active displacement of a Eurocentric "logos" from its position of sanctity in "London and Paris." He claims: "transfers from the periphery to the center do not leave the center as it was. The transnational story of upward mobility is not just a claiming of authority but a redefinition of authority, and a redefinition that can have many beneficiaries, for it means a recomposition as well as a redistribution of cultural capital." ("Secularism, Elitism, Progress and Other Transgressions", p. 32).

³⁶ David Lloyd, "'Dubliners', masculinity, and temperance nationalism", in *Semicolonial Joyce*, eds. Derek Attridge and Majorie Howes, Cambridge UP, 2000 pp.145-6.





in such a way that it authenticates its originality, refers to secondariness and imitation but also disturbs the hierarchies of originality. It is at the same time a copy, but also a component part of the text without which its validation (authentication) is impossible. The same can be applied to colonial relationships: to whatever extent the subordinate culture can depend on the dominant one in its definition, the dominant culture is not autonomous. Its validation cannot be fully realised without interaction with peripheral cultures. As an example we can take the Croatian National Theatre, built during the Austro-Hungarian regime as a copy of the Vienna Opera House. Yet, though a genuine replica, the Zagreb Opera House – as the locale of an institution – did not play the same role and therefore did not have the same significance as the one in Vienna³⁷ since it was inscribed in a different cultural context, it took over different signification. Yet, it is not only that the signification of the Zagreb Opera depends on its Viennese model; the significance of the Vienna Opera is also modified by its Zagreb replica. On the one hand the performances in Zagreb Opera were replicas of those in Vienna. On the other hand, the fact that some plays subversive to the idea of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were staged in the Zagreb Opera House challenged the idea of the opera house as such – not only in Zagreb, but also in Vienna. In other words, it is not only that the definition of the periphery depends on the centre; the centre is also defined by its interaction with the peripheral.³⁸

For this reason in contemporary multicultural conditions comparative research becomes a precondition for cultural understanding. Its aim is not to study influences but to contribute to understanding of the complexity of relations in multicultural and multinational societies. The application of the postcolonial paradigm in such research does not promote the traditional imperialist notion of the hierarchical relationship between the centre and the periphery; it is only a methodological tool to see these relations in a new light and in all their complexity. For such an understanding the study of intertextual relations is of utmost importance.

³⁷ The Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph I ceremoniously opened the building in 1895. Its repertoire under Miletić's guidance contributed to the national self-awareness in a way similar to the role Abbey played in the Irish national awakening.

³⁸ See note 35





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VRSTE INTERTEKSTUALNOSTI

Rad polazi od pretpostavke da postoji temeljna razlika između aluzije i intertekstualnosti. Aluzija označava činjenicu da tekst priziva neki drugi tekst ili korpus tekstova koji su utjecali na autora, dok intertekstualnost izučava suodnos između teksta i značenjskih praksi koje evocira i u koje je utkan. Autorica smatra da postoje tri tipa intertekstualnosti – subverzivan, adaptivan i transpozicijski. Prvi je karakterističan za modernizam, drugi za postmodernizam. Treći, transpozicijski, značajan je za postkolonijalne studije jer sagledava kulturnu dinamiku između metropole (centra) i periferije koja ne redefinira samo periferiju, već i centar.

Key words: intertext, allusion, modernism, postmodernism, postcolonial studies

Ključne riječi: intertekst, intertekstualnost, aluzija, modernizam, postmodernizam, kolonijalne studije

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